



The Income Maintenance News

A BHCE/BIMA Publication

Summer 2003

In this issue:

- ❑ [A First Edition](#)
- ❑ [Training Section News](#)
- ❑ [EM Web Updates](#)
- ❑ [FS 101](#)
- ❑ [Family Planning Waiver](#)
- ❑ [SeniorCare Renewal Process](#)
- ❑ [CARES News](#)
- ❑ [IMAC Update](#)
- ❑ [New CARES Case Directory](#)
- ❑ [MMIS Changes Coming](#)
- ❑ [FS QC Corner](#)
- ❑ [Web Links](#)

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A First Edition

By Dave Hippler, Editor



Welcome to the first edition of The Income Maintenance News. This newsletter replaces the Food Stamp News and now incorporates information on CARES, policy, tips, and trainings for the Medicaid program, as well as for the Food Stamp Program. The new look and feel is an attempt to serve as the voice of the two Bureaus that administer these programs: The Bureau of Health Care Eligibility (BHCE) and the Bureau of Income Maintenance Administration (BIMA).

The Income Maintenance News is intended to be read online, as there are many links to other resources within The News. However, it can be printed and distributed manually also. Please feel free to provide us feedback on the content. We hope that you find it helpful and informative.

Training Section News

By Theresa Fosbinder, IM Training Coordinator

BPS Training Section Web Site Redesign

You spoke - we listened. After months of work, the BPS Training Section is launching the website you've been waiting for. Everything you're looking for is in one easy-to-use site.

The site was redesigned based on customer feedback. It has a new look and feel and is easier to navigate. The redesigned site is organized by "experience level" (i.e., new workers, experienced workers, supervisors) and reflects job function and programmatic areas (e.g. Food Stamps, Medicaid) as well.



Features of the redesigned website include:

- All new worker information is contained on the site.
- There is now a section just for experienced workers.
- Supervisors have easy access to resources to make their job easier.
- All distance learning resources have been reorganized for easier searching.
- The Resources & Links area contains manuals, desk aids, policy references, and many links to other websites that can help make your work easier.

Visit www.dwd.state.wi.us/destrain/trainsec. It is your portal to all training resources, online and classroom, available through the BPS Training Section!

Eligibility Management Web Updates

By Dave Hippler, Information Systems Business Analyst



As part of an ongoing initiative to move toward more effective and efficient use of technology, the Division of Health Care Financing has been busy updating its web pages. We have made several enhancements that we hope will make your jobs a little bit easier. These include:

- The [Medicaid Eligibility Handbook](#) (formerly known as the “MA Handbook”) has joined the Food Stamp Handbook online! As a first step, the handbook will be available in a viewable and printable format (PDF) in its entirety. Future versions of the handbook will have a better look and feel, will be more dynamic and interactive, and will allow capability for searches, history, and interaction with other web-based resources. Effective immediately, there will be no more paper handbook releases.
- A redesign of the [Eligibility Management](#) (EM) page. This site will serve as a one-stop shopping site for Income Maintenance workers. The CARES Call Center page on the DWD web site was obsoleted and the information was brought forward to the new Eligibility Management page.
- A new site was added recently to the EM web page called [CARES Updates](#). This page was added so that IM workers can remain aware of recent and upcoming CARES system changes.
- Many DWD forms and publications have been renamed to become DHFS forms and publications. These can be found from the [Eligibility Management](#) page.
- The Bureaus will start using a new topic based [Policy Notification Sign-up](#) distribution list. (This will be similar to the emails used to notify users of new Operations Memos that you may already be familiar with). From this page, you can choose to receive any or all notifications the Bureaus send out regarding Operations Memos, FS related emails, or Medicaid related emails. These email lists will continue to be used to notify staff of Operations Memos releases. They will also notify staff of handbook releases, and policy specific to either FS or Medicaid. If you are already on the Operations Memos email list, you do not need to make any changes on the sign-up page. However, if you want to receive emails for handbook releases, go to the page and check the box for the mail list and enter your email address. It's that easy.

Food Stamps 101: Food Stamp Basics for a Healthier Wisconsin



By Stacia Jankowski, Policy Analyst

The Food Stamp Program has embarked on a new and exciting way to spread the word about the Food Stamp

Program to community based organizations. Beginning on July 21, 2003, a series of 13, half-day workshops were presented to community-based organizations on the basics of the Food Stamp Program.

This round of training sessions targeted food pantries and shelters, including homeless and domestic abuse shelters, and were conducted throughout the state. Through these sessions, we hope to utilize these organizations' connections to their communities and ensure that potentially eligible individuals are able to access the Food Stamp Program.

The topics of this training included:

- ❑ Recognizing individuals who should be referred to the Food Stamp Program for an eligibility determination.
- ❑ The Food Stamp Program application process, including information about priority services.
- ❑ Basic information about non-financial and financial eligibility requirements for the Food Stamp Program.
- ❑ The types of verifications that are required when applying.
- ❑ Cooperating with workers involved with the Food Stamp Program.
- ❑ Identifying the requirements for customers to maintain eligibility for food stamp benefits.
- ❑ Special circumstances that may exist in the Food Stamp Program.
- ❑ Available resources for the Food Stamp Program.

This training program was a collaborative effort among DHFS, the DWD/ DWS/BPS Training Section, and the University of Oshkosh CCDET.

Family Planning Waiver Follow Through Looks Good

By Joyce Wells, Policy Analyst

A first look at Family Planning Waiver (FPW) Medicaid participation shows that women who enroll in Family Planning Presumptive Eligibility are following through at the Economic Support Agency (ESA). They are successfully accessing continuous FPW eligibility with the help of their certifying agencies.

Out of a sample of 247 Family Planning Presumptive Eligibility enrollments in March-May, 90% had applied at the ESA by mid-May. Of those applicants, 94% of the cases were determined eligible for FPW (196 cases) or full benefit Medicaid (10 cases) and 6% (14 cases) were denied or withdrew from the program.

These early results show that most presumptively eligible women are applying for the continuous FPW benefit and accessing the health care services for a full year.

SENIORCARE RENEWAL PROCESS IS STARTING

By Theresa Fosbinder, IM Training Coordinator



Persons who are enrolled in the SeniorCare Prescription Drug Assistance Program must complete and return their preprinted SeniorCare renewal application if they wish to be certified for a new 12 month benefit period. Renewal application forms are sent to participants in the 11th month of their benefit period. Participants have approximately six weeks to submit the application **and an enrollment fee** to Wisconsin SeniorCare.

The 12-month benefit period for over 40,000 SeniorCare participants who started the program on September 1st of last year will be ending on August 31, 2003. This group of SeniorCare participants should return their SeniorCare renewal applications by August 31, 2003 to ensure no gap in their SeniorCare coverage.

Those who began participating in the SeniorCare program after September 1, 2002 will have annual renewals due. Each month, SeniorCare will send renewal applications to participants in their 11th month of eligibility. Participants must complete the renewal application and send in a new enrollment fee in order for their eligibility to be renewed for another 12-month benefit period. Participants who continue to be eligible and participate in the program will not receive new SeniorCare cards. They will continue to use their current cards.



CARES News

By Pam Kiern, CARES Analyst

This fall we will be automating the data exchange New Hire process. The enhancements will include:

1. The data exchange process automatically updating CARES on AFEI and sending out a new employment verification request notice.
2. A new employer find function in CARES that will enable workers to correctly identify employers and employer Federal Employer Identification Numbers (FEINs).
3. Elimination of New Hire dispositions that require worker action.

We will also be enhancing the data exchange Unemployment Compensation Benefits (UCB) process this fall.

The enhancements for this will include:

1. Creation of a new UCB screen with more detailed information that will be scheduled in the intake, review, and person add driver flows. The current UCB screens will still be available but will no longer be displayed in the driver flow.
2. Elimination of UCB dispositions that require worker action.

For more detailed CARES Updates, check out the new CARES Updates page at http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/em/cares_updates/index.htm

Fraud Conference Announcement

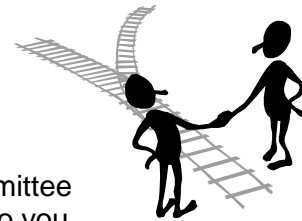
Mark your calendars now! The **Wisconsin Association on Public Assistance Fraud** will be hosting its annual training conference on October 1-3 at the Fox Hills Golf Resort & Conference Center, located in Mishicot, WI.

Training will be held on 2 tracks to accommodate everyone! Topics will include: Identifying Immigrants and Evaluating Documentation, Interview and Investigative Techniques, The ADH Process, Child Care Fraud, and The Collections Process.

The conference has been approved for 20 hours of ECM credits. Look for more information in the next WAPAF newsletter, or contact your WAPAF Regional director.

IMAC UPDATE

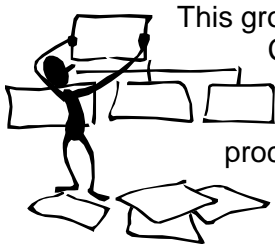
By Bernadette Connolly, Policy Analyst



Over the past few months, the Income Maintenance Advisory Committee (IMAC) has been working on several items that may be of interest to you. The Committee has worked on budget initiatives, Program Integrity, and Quality Assurance Performance Standards for the 2004 contract, to name a few. All this information and more, including agendas, minutes, and handouts can be found on the IMAC web site at <http://www.imac.state.wi.us>.

The committee has recently restructured IMAC subcommittees to assure that we have effective channels of communication with local agencies. Brief descriptions of the subcommittee charters are described below and can also be found on the IMAC web site.

1. IM, W-2, FSET AND CHILD CARE COORDINATION COMMITTEE



This group was created at the request of the W-2 Contract and Implementation (C&I) Committee to review Medicaid, Food Stamps, FSET, W-2 and Child Care issues brought forth from the Workload Symposium that cross programs. The committee will be responsible for providing feedback on existing programs and procedures and for making recommendations on the design, implementation and evaluation of new initiatives that cross income maintenance programs and work programs.

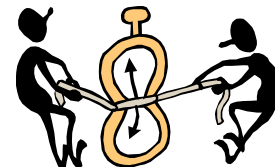
2. QUALITY ASSURANCE



This subcommittee, comprised of state and local agency representatives, will develop and recommend strategies for quality assurance compliance in the IM programs. Issues to be addressed include customer service and payment accuracy. In addition, this workgroup will develop the standards by which penalties may be imposed and/or incentive payments may be made to counties based upon measurable performance standards. This will also involve ensuring the appropriate implementation of performance standards from modifying contract language to identifying appropriate funding mechanisms.

3. TRAINING and TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

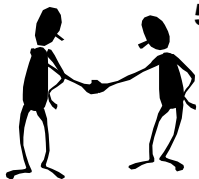
This subcommittee was created in 2003 to evaluate all aspects of the training and technical assistance service and delivery model for the Income Maintenance agency workforce. This includes the availability and timeliness of training and technical assistance for all experience levels of IM workers.



4. IT (Information Technology)

This subcommittee represents the interests of local agencies in strategic planning for automation efforts. Its goal is to identify problems, explore options and make recommendations for IT systems improvements to DHFS and DWD and to recommend appropriate communication channels between the local agencies, DHFS and DWD about priorities, concerns and work in progress. Systems included within the scope of the IT subcommittee are CARES, SSI/Medicaid system, EBT Systems, MMIS, and the State Supplemental SSI Payment System.

5. PROGRAM POLICY COORDINATION



This subcommittee was created to review issue papers and policy documents and recommend policy and process changes to meet the goal of a more simplified application, redetermination, and eligibility determination process for customers and

local agencies. In addition, this subcommittee will work toward the goal of coordinating the Food Stamps and Medicaid Programs to the extent possible to reduce workload for local agencies and simplify the programs for customers.

6. WORKLOAD AND FINANCING ISSUES

This subcommittee was created as an ad hoc committee to assess all options to relieve workload at the local level, including the possibility of increased administrative funding.

New CARES Case Directory On Its Way

By Dave Hippler, Information Systems Business Analyst

New web based workload management tools for CARES are being developed. By logging onto a website and entering your CARES worker ID, you will be able to find a variety of information about your caseload, and be better equipped to manage your workload.



Old



New

Feedback from both a user survey and the IMAC IT subcommittee was solicited and used in planning of the workload management tools. Based on this feedback, several different views of caseload and workload data are expected to be available.

One of the main features of the workload management tools will be a web-based case directory. Accessing the case directory online will minimize the costs associated with printing and mailing, and will allow more direct and up to date access to case directory information.

The new case directory will allow multiple views of CARES data to help you maximize workload efficiencies. For example, with a few clicks you could choose to:

- ☐ see your entire caseload by primary person name in alphabetical order.
- ☐ sort your caseload by cases due for review in a certain month.
- ☐ view only the cases in your caseload that are "mixed" SeniorCare cases.

The online case directory will be refreshed with the latest data available in CARES at least once a week so that any time you log in you will have access to the most current data available.

We are striving to make the tool as user friendly as possible, without adding more complexity. Look for more information on the new workload management tools, including the on-line case directory this fall!

MMIS Changes Coming

By Pam Kiern, CARES Analyst

EDS is making some changes to insurance information on the MMIS. This is scheduled for implementation in mid October 2003 and an Ops Memo is forthcoming. The changes include:

- Medicare Managed Care policies will be added to recipient's file. (RT screen)
- A Medicare Supplement Indicator will be added to the insurance segment. (RT screen)
- There will be new cost avoidance codes on the recipients eligibility file. (RE screen)

Food Stamp QC Corner

By Marcia Williamson, Quality Assurance Specialist - Advanced

New QC Supervisor

In October 2002, State QC welcomed a new Supervisor, Pat Woldt, in the Green Bay region. Pat has been working as a first party state QC reviewer for 20 years, so we appreciate her expertise. Pat can be reached at (920) 448-5332.

Employment Status

There are times when a change in employment "type" can cause a food stamp error. QC has seen three types of situations where this happens. In all these situations the recipient may not realize this is a change that the Economic Support agency needs to know about.

- **Work Study:** The student FS customer is awarded Work Study, and thus the income is exempt. The student depletes all the hours awarded to him/her, but continues to work there. At that point the income is considered countable for food stamps. This is hard to monitor and prevent, but it helps to check at review and notify them they need to report if they are aware this has occurred.
- **VISTA income, now called AmeriCorps*VISTA:** Occasionally when an AmeriCorps*VISTA placement ends, the FS recipient maintains employment. At this point the income is countable for Food Stamps. It's likely the customer will not think to report this as a reportable change in employment. AmeriCorps*VISTA status should be re-confirmed with the employer at application and review. (Also refer to [FS Handbook Appendix 12.02.13.01](#) to see when AmeriCorps*VISTA income counts and when it doesn't.)
- **Temporary Agency Employment:** Occasionally an employee will be hired permanently for a job they are already working in through a "temp" agency. The customer will probably not consider this a reportable job change. However, QC is required to consider this a change of employer. Customers with temporary employment should be reminded to report if they are hired by a company where they were originally placed by a temp agency.

For those of you reading a printed version of this newsletter, the web addresses for included links are:

The Income Maintenance News	http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/foodstamps/news/default.htm
Medicaid Eligibility Handbook	http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/em/ma_handbook/index.htm
Cares Updates	http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/em/cares_updates/index.htm
Eligibility Mgmt. page	http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/em/index.htm
DHFS	http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/
Policy Notification Sign-up	http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/em/policy_notification/signup.htm

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